



By Elder
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Of the Seventy

A SURE WITNESS

Having been raised in an active Latter-day Saint family, I think I grew up having a testimony. I never seriously doubted the truthfulness of the gospel. Like many teenagers, I occasionally questioned things in my mind, but I never felt that the Church wasn't true.

It was this faith that inspired me to serve a mission. I knew I needed to serve. But even though I had no serious doubts about the Church, I realized I had to gain a testimony of my own.

I began my mission in February 1961, leaving Salt Lake City's winter for the heat of an Argentine summer. There was no language training for missionaries at the time, but my mission president promised us we would speak fluent Spanish after reading the entire Book of Mormon out loud. I had learned Spanish as a child and was speaking fluently within the first

few weeks, but still I followed my mission president's instructions.

In the first town I was assigned to, my companion and I stayed in the living quarters behind an old store. We couldn't proselytize in the afternoon during the Argentine siesta, so I used that time to pray and read the Book of Mormon in the front entrance of the old store.

One day, thousands of miles from home in the front of that store, I stopped to think about what I was reading. When you pray and ponder about the Book of Mormon, the Spirit can influence you. I pondered what the Book of Mormon was teaching, I thought about Joseph Smith translating the plates, and I had a sudden feeling come over me. At that moment I knew that everything I had been taught all my life was true. It suddenly became very clear to me that Joseph Smith was a

prophet and that I was reading the word of God. It was all true.

That sudden feeling was electrifying. It went through my whole body from my head to my toes. It wasn't a chill, and it wasn't a burning. But it was a sure witness.

I've never forgotten that day, and I've felt the Holy Ghost many times since. Because of that experience, I recognize the Holy Ghost when He is testifying to me. That feeling isn't always exactly the same, but it's always warm and secure.

Even though the Spirit speaks to us personally, Moroni's promise is to everyone (see Moroni 10:3–5). Moroni's promise in the Book of Mormon is that the Spirit will testify to you of the truth of the Book of Mormon if you will read, study, ponder, and then pray with real intent. That promise applies to me, to you, and to everyone in the world. A sure witness will come to those who seek it. ■

DRAW NEARER TO GOD

"I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book."

Joseph Smith, in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 64.

